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ABSTRACT

Based on data obtained from the study of three highly visible, well supported, full-time adult learning centers that started as small, part-time operations, this manual contains guidelines for implementing an approach to developing an adult education program through community linkages. The linkage concept is discussed. Covered next is the positive effect of community linkages on various phases of program operation, including recruitment, supportive services, operating funds, visibility, and program development. Examined in a section on how to develop and maintain linkages are such topics as using existing contacts, targeting linkages of greatest benefit, recognizing the needs and characteristics of community and prospective partners, using students as linkers, expanding program capabilities, gaining and recording intelligence on and for linking partners, developing interagency friendships, being honest and forthright, avoiding conflict with linking partners, and competing and cooperating. An inventory of linkage possibilities is provided. Described in a section on costs and problems of linkages are the following concerns: loss of autonomy, time, goal displacement, organizational disruption, and termination. (MN)

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DEVELOPING AN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM THROUGH COMMUNITY LINKAGES

An Approach to Recruiting & Retaining Students, Securing Supportive Services, and Increasing Program Visibility, Prestige and Revenues

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout four years of intensive field research focusing on adult basic education, the authors of this Manual have noted that ABE seems to be divided into two worlds. The first is the realm of the small, part-time ABE programs valiantly operating on a shoestring. Struggling against difficult odds, these programs have educated hundreds of thousands of adults, opening new vistas of opportunity for them. The second world is the realm of the large, full-time ABE programs operating with large budgets and generally located in urban areas. These programs, which provide comprehensive supportive services to their students and quite often utilize the adult learning center model, are not plagued by the crushing insecurity and marginality which characterize part-time programs.

How might a small, part-time ABE program go about developing into a secure, well supported, full-time operation? Though an increase in governmental support is an obvious answer, it is probably an unrealistic one. Practically speaking, program development has to occur through the creative use of resources that already exist in a given ABE program's community. The question is, what are those resources and how can they best be exploited?

In an effort to discover the key to developmental success, the authors studied three highly visible, well supported, full-time adult learning centers which had started as small, part-time operations. It was clear that the key to their developmental success was largely the effective establishment and maintenance of comprehensive inter-organizational relationships or "linkages."

The Linkage Concept

Obviously all organizations require certain resources if they are to achieve their goals and objectives. No adult education program could function, for example, without students, staff, funds, and instructional materials. Yet very few of the resources needed by most organizations exist within the organization. Consequently, organizations must form relationships with external individuals and organizations capable of supplying needed resources. The resulting connections between organizations are often termed linkages.

There are several characteristics of linkages which surface in this Manual, one being the concept of intensity. Linkages of low intensity are typically informal. Few resources are transferred between the linking partners, and communication is relatively infrequent. At the opposite end of the intensity continuum are linkages of high intensity, where the linking partners are very much involved with each other. Such linkages tend to be more formalized. Many resources are transferred, and communication is frequent. Generally speaking, highly intense relationships require more time to maintain and a greater degree of coordination between the linking partners.

Very few stable linkages are one-way affairs, where one party receives something of value and the other does not. There must be mutual benefit. At the same time, in a linkage arrangement each party generally has to give up something in order to receive the resources gained. For example, in most inter-organizational relationships each party generally forfeits some operating autonomy along with the administrative time required to establish and maintain the relationship.

There are several mechanisms for establishing linkages.* Interpersonal contact is a common one. In this case a member of one organization forms or capitalizes on a personal association with a member of another organization. Word-of-mouth recruiting is an example. Another linkage mechanism consists of specialized inter-system media such as newsletters and radio or TV advertising. Still another linkage mechanism is specialized linking roles or sub-unity within an organization. In this case, specific staff persons are deliberately assigned to establishing linkages. A good example is the use of community liaison personnel or door-to-door recruiters. Finally there is overlapping membership, where a relationship between organizations is achieved because some members of one organization are also members of another. One of our case study programs established an important linkage with a Community Action Program (CAP) agency because at the time most of its students were members of that group.

The inter-organizational relationships developed by our three case study programs take many forms. Some are what we have called referral relationships. In a referral relationship, an agency which needs basic education for its clients sends them to the ABE program to receive that service. Similar to a referral relationship is a cosponsorship relationship, whereby the ABE program and another organization team up to conduct ABE classes jointly, often on the cosponsor's premises. Still another common relationship is termed a donor relationship, in which a community organization donates resources to the ABE program for charitable motives. And finally,

* See Ronald G. Havelock et al., Planning for Innovation through Dissemination and Utilization of Knowledge. (Ann Arbor: Center for Research on Utilization of Scientific Knowledge, 1971), pp. 2-35.

there are what might be called control-coordination relationships, whereby someone from the ABE program, by virtue of his expertise or interest, serves on community decision-making organizations such as CAMPS.

The production of this Manual is a direct result of our conclusion that these linkage relationships, and others, are highly beneficial to ABE programs.

Methodology of this Manual

The data upon which this Manual is based were gathered through intensive interviews with the directors and staffs of the Albany Adult Learning Center, Albany, New York; the White Plains Adult Literacy Program at Rochambeau in White Plains, New York; and the Bergen Community College Adult Learning Center in Hackensack, New Jersey. In addition, relevant records from each of these programs were collected and analyzed. Though the theoretical base for this Manual was primarily generated from experience and wisdom of those interviewed, previous research and analysis conducted by one of the authors helped organize the Manual and guide the analysis.*

In developing this Manual, our intent has been to synthesize the experience of our informant programs and present it in such a way that others can replicate the interagency linkage strategies developed by these programs. The value of this work, therefore, should be evaluated primarily on its capacity to be of practical assistance to adult educators wishing to establish more effective programs of inter-organizational relationships. The

* Harold Beder, Community Linkages in Urban Public School Adult Basic Education Programs: A Study of Cosponsorship and the Use of Community Liaison Personnel. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1972.

Manual is organized into three sections: Section I explains the benefits which can accrue to a program which has established effective interagency relationships; Section II explains how to establish and maintain linkages; and Section III explains some of the costs and problems of linkages to which a director should be alerted.

SECTION I

HOW YOU CAN BENEFIT FROM COMMUNITY LINKAGES

It has often been demonstrated that by selectively establishing linkage relationships with community agencies, a local ABE program can fulfill many program needs. A program of community linkages will help your program to obtain:

- More students
- A better retention rate — students persisting in the program to attain their goals
- Supportive services such as stipends
- Increased operating funds

and

- Greater program visibility within the community.

All these benefits are interrelated. In other words, as enrollment and retention increase, it is generally easier to secure more operating revenues from funding agencies. Similarly, as visibility increases, a program's ability to draw students increases proportionately. Thus, each benefit derived from interagency relationships serves as a building block for satisfying other program needs. Or to put it somewhat differently, by initially using interagency relationships to satisfy several selective needs, a program development cycle is created which enables an ABE program to grow on many dimensions. Assume, for example, that in one year an ABE program secures a 100 percent increase in the number of students it serves. This might enable the program to gain more funding which could be used to add a counselor, recruiter, or to pay the salary of a full-time rather than part-time director. The ensuing program diversification would then increase the program's visibility and ability to serve and draw more

students and so on.

Recruitment

Recruitment is a perennial problem for most ABE programs. In fact, a 1973 national survey conducted by the Center for Adult Education showed that 78.2 percent of the local ABE directors surveyed (N=776) felt that recruitment should be a high priority area for development of more effective program practices. Fifty percent felt that it should be the highest priority of all the general priorities listed.

In some small communities where the target population for ABE is quite small, the recruitment problem is probably insoluble, as there just are not enough potential students. Yet this situation is the exception rather than the rule. Most communities have many more undereducated adults than the ABE program could serve — if they could only be reached. Interagency referral is an excellent way to reach them, because once referral linkages are formed with agencies that send students to the ABE program, the same ABE students can be referred back when they are in need of the referral agency's services. For example, in a referral linkage with the Employment Service, students who need basic education as a precondition to employment or job training are sent to the ABE program. Then, once the student has completed ABE or GED training, he can be referred back to the Employment Service for job placement. From one linkage relationship the ABE program gains both students and job placement.

Cosponsorship of classes with organizations which need ABE to complement their operations is another excellent way to recruit, for if a cosponsor values ABE, he will quite often donate services which add to class success. Most cosponsors, for example, will donate the classroom space, and many

employers are willing to release their employees with pay to attend ABE classes.

There are two other reasons why referral and cosponsorship recruiting are so effective. First, in contrast to door-to-door recruiting, or mass media advertising, these methods require no extra expenditure of operating funds. Secondly, by forming cosponsorships and referral relationships with agencies that represent the kind of students an ABE program particularly wants to recruit, the ABE program can selectively focus its recruitment effort.

Table I shows how linkage relationships have enhanced the recruiting activities of our case study programs.

TABLE I

STUDENTS RECEIVED THROUGH LINKAGE RELATIONSHIPS[1]

	Number of agencies which refer students	Number of students referred	Total Enrollment	Agency referrals as a percentage of total enrollment
Albany Adult Learning Center (End of April 1974)	34	300	428	70%
Bergen Community College Adult Learning Center (Total: 3/70-8/73)	73	2782	4668	60%
White Plains Adult Basic Education Program (1/64-1/74)	31	4234	7637	55%

[1]Source: Records supplied by programs. Note: Time periods vary for each program.

Supportive Services

A better education is only one of the many needs which confront basic education students. To many students, for example, ABE is an instrumental step toward securing more rewarding employment; clearly, for these students job placement or training are as crucial as basic education. Similarly, many students require day care for their children, transportation to and from classes, or stipending in order for them to participate in ABE. An ABE program which can provide such supportive services obviously can do a more complete job of serving its clients, and the better the service provided to clients, the greater is the likelihood that they will remain in the program. The problem is that state funds can not generally be used to purchase supportive services, and thus if supportive services are to be rendered, they must be secured free of charge.

One way that supportive services can be secured for ABE students free of charge is for the ABE program to establish linkages with agencies which specialize in providing these services. Welfare will often provide stipends. Business, industry and employment agencies are good sources of placement, and charitable organizations will often supply transportation. Some of the representative supportive services secured through interagency linkages by the three case study programs are shown below in Table II.

TABLE II

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES RECEIVED THROUGH INTERAGENCY LINKAGES[1]

Program	Supportive Service	No. of Agencies Providing
Albany Adult Learning Center	Placement	7
	Stipends	5
	Child Care	6
	Transportation	6
	Scholarships	8
	Special Area Counseling	4
	Clothing	1
	Health Care	Various
Bergen County College Adult Learning Center	Placement	12
	Stipends	10
	Child Care	8
	Scholarships	7
	Volunteers	12
	Diagnosis-Therapy	15
	Individual-Family Counseling	7
	Housing	4
	Health Care	10
	Educational Placement	12
	Drug & Rehabilitation Counseling	6
	Consumer Services	4
	Assistance to the Aging	4
	Educational Counseling	10
White Plains Adult Basic Education Program	Placement	21
	Stipends	8
	Child Care	5
	Transportation	3
	Diagnosis-Therapy	11
	Individual-Family Counseling	5
	Human Rights Counseling	4
	Housing	4
	Social-Legal Information	7
	Health Care	4
	College Placement	3

[1]Source: Records supplied by Program

Increased Operating Funds

By establishing interagency linkages ABE programs can supplement operating revenues in two ways. First, community organizations are quite often willing to donate such things as classroom space, furniture and materials to the ABE program, thus saving the program the expense of purchasing them. Through such "in kind" contributions, the Bergen Community College Adult Learning Center has been able to secure a large building from a community newspaper and wall-to-wall carpeting donated by the Hackensack Chamber of Commerce. Secondly, ABE programs are often able to generate hard cash by contracting their services to agencies which need ABE and have the money to pay for it. Table III shows how our three programs supplement their operating budgets through interagency relationships.

TABLE III

INCREASED OPERATING FUNDS RECEIVED AS A RESULT OF INTERAGENCY RELATIONSHIPS [1]

	In Kind		In Cash	
Program	No. of Organizations	Supplied	No. of Organizations	Dollar Amount
Bergen Community College Adult Learning Center	2	Building Carpeting	5	$325,171
Albany Adult Learning Center	10	Clerical Services Readers for the blind Tutors Aides Volunteer teachers Recruitment	12	$594,000
White Plains Adult Basic Education Program	8	Psychological testing Aides Instructional Placement Counseling Building	Data not available	

[1]Source: Records supplied by program

Visibility

The Albany Adult Learning Center has interagency linkages with well over 26 organizations. By 1972, White Plains had linked with over 39 organizations, and as of 1970 the Bergen Community College Adult Learning Center had formed linkages with at least 74 organizations. Assume that each agency has an average of five staff members at the managerial level—staff members who are themselves opinion leaders and interact extensively in the community. For the sake of argument, also assume that each one of these staff members tells ten associates about the ABE program. That would mean that over 1300 people would have heard of the Albany Adult Learning Center through interagency relationships, 1950 people would have learned of the White Plains Adult Basic Education program and over 3700 would have information about the Bergen Community College Adult Learning Center.

One of the directors interviewed for this publication cautions that the concept of visibility should not be oversimplified. The impact of program visibility is not immediate because "few people react to information about ABE until they reach the point where it has personal relevance." Where staff of other community organizations are aware of your ABE program and information is "at the ready," the flow of student referrals is stimulated. Furthermore, if an ABE program is highly visible, recruitment is enhanced since students are more likely to know where to come to satisfy their basic education needs. Similarly, it becomes easier to form linkages as potential linkers approach the ABE program rather than the ABE program's having to seek them out.

A Developmental Tool

It has been argued that not only are linkage relationships important sources of recruitment, retention, supportive services, increased operating funds and visibility, but they are also potential building blocks for program development. However, though we have documented our arguments for the benefits of community linkages, the "developmental building block" argument has been only partially supported. Perhaps the most convincing way to portray the developmental potential of community linkages is to provide the reader with a developmental history of one of our case study ABE programs—the Albany Adult Learning Center. The history of any of our three programs would serve to illustrate our point very well as they all started as part-time programs and grew through the effective use of interagency relationships. The Albany Program has been singled out, however, because six hours of interviews with the director, Garrett W. Murphy, have been carefully transcribed, thus enabling us to portray the history largely in the director's own words.

Albany, the state capital, is a medium-sized city located in the central portion of New York State. The city is immediately surrounded by suburban communities; thereafter, the setting quickly changes to rural. State government and service occupations are the largest sources of employment. In 1964 over half of the adults living in the city of Albany had less than a 12th grade education. Clearly, there was a need for adult basic education.

The Albany Adult Learning Center first began to satisfy that need in 1964 as a summer operation comprising three classes. Speaking of those beginning days, Garrett Murphy explains:

> We started with three classes. Actually it was a situation

> where the superintendent brought me in and asked if I would like a job for the summer teaching a class of welfare recipients. If I could get ten welfare recipients together, I could teach the class, and it looked like a good deal. As I was walking out of the door, the superintendent glanced at the bottom of the paper and said, "Oh, Gary, I don't want to get your hopes up, but if you can get three or more classes together, you would be the coordinator... ." I went out and immediately got thirty. I had a cushion; my mother worked at the Social Services Department here in Albany.

Thus, the Albany program was initially successful in doing the first thing any beginning program must do—recruiting students. Granted, part of this early success lies in the fact that the program was offering to meet a large need previously unmet, but at the same time it is important to note that the director started his program by capitalizing on a personal contact in the Social Services Department to establish a referral linkage. This contact, in this case a close relative, provided access to the Commissioner of Social Services:

> She (my mother) was an entré to the Commissioner, and when I sat down with him, he thought referring students to our program was a fine idea except for one thing—he wanted to make sure that this thing was not touted by the press as a guarantee that everyone that went into this would immediately get off the welfare rolls.

The director agreed to be sensitive to the commissioner's "political" concerns and as a result received thirty students from the Department of Social Services, enough to start a small, but reasonably stable Welfare Education program.

Was the beginning program successful? Murphy explains:

> It ran pretty well all summer, and I think the first thing that started to make the program turn the corner was that we planned a graduation for it. We invited the Social Service Commissioner in and gave him due credit for it. . . we got a

> few local politicians whom I knew, and we had the press. We talked the press into it because this was something new to them and they were interested.

Here we see the solidifying of one linkage with the Commissioner of Social Services and the beginning of several new and highly beneficial linkages with the press and local power brokers. The occasion was a special event, a graduation, which had considerable human interest appeal to newspaper readers. The resulting newspaper coverage increased the visibility of the fledgling program and promoted community support.

At the end of summer, 1964, Garrett Murphy returned to his full-time job as a teacher in the public schools, and the program continued as an evening operation conducted in a public school building. In January, 1965, the decision was made to offer high school equivalency. Many people in the target population who had completed the ninth grade or above were actually in need of basic education.

> It was silly to advertise "get your 8th grade diploma" to people who had already gotten beyond the 8th grade. So I went to the superintendent and said, "May I have funds to run a high school equivalency program right on the same floor as ABE?" We got the funds for high school equivalency. Then we could advertise a program to get your high school equivalency and yet make ABE a major stage in the process. That is when we began to grow some more.

Though the availability of funds was certainly a prime factor in enabling program diversification to high school equivalency, it is also important to note that the personal linkage the director had established with the superintendent's office paid off. It should also be pointed out that the credibility the ABE program had established by this date considerably aided the director in his negotiations. The ABE program had established a

reputation, and that reputation was based to a large degree on its ability to deliver. Clearly, inter-organizational relationships had played an important role in establishing that image.

> By June of 1965 we had graduated three groups of Welfare Education mothers. We hired them. There was a provision under the Economic Opportunity Act which allowed people who worked in CAP projects to earn $85.00 a month working part-time, and it would not be considered income by Welfare. We got all our welfare mothers together and said, "Do you want to work a few hours a day for us and make an extra $85.00 a month?" They said, "Sure, what do I have to do?" I said, "Go out and tell people what you've been through. See if you can get them signed up."

At this point we see that the program has begun to utilize another linkage device, employment of its own students and graduates as linking agents. Was this effort successful? Garrett Murphy replies:

> 880 people agreed to start classes; only 220 showed up, but that was not bad—220 out of 4,000 households. We opened in the fall of '65 with about 200 students.

Why was this particular door-to-door recruiting effort so successful when other programs have failed using similar techniques? Part of the reason undoubtedly is that there was a large population of undereducated adults who had not been previously canvassed (4,000 households). Yet at the same time, part of the success has to be attributed to the recruiters, who were highly familiar with the program, personally very supportive of it, and came from the communities they were canvassing. Moreover, recruiters were well supported by the program's staff.

> I ran pre-service for them. I got maps of the city. We rode all over the city changing the maps, because they were tearing down, putting a mall in, and everything was different. We altered the maps and made copies of a number of them. I had

> very official letters written up for each one of my recruiters and I signed them. The letters thanked each citizen for being part of an effort to help education in Albany. I gave each recruiter a little kit with this letter in it, and she could bring it in and show it to each household.

At the same time that the recruiting effort was taking place, the director and his assistant were also hard at work forming linkages with agencies located in the recruitment target area. Much of this work was accomplished by forming personal relationships with directors of these agencies. For example:

> This was the time of community action, and there was a group down there called SEN-CAP which had a storefront down the street. Some of the people in my program were members of SEN-CAP [South End Neighborhood Community Action Program]. The head of SEN-CAP came to our first graduation to see what was going on. That was when we formed an immediate linkage with them.

Here the director has formed a relationship with a student referring agency through two mechanisms, personal contact with the agency's director and overlapping membership. Overlapping membership refers to the situation that exists when ABE staff or students are members or clients of other organizations—welfare agencies, health agencies, CAP agencies. Overlapping membership represents a special type of linkage which often goes undetected in ABE programs. Failure to recognize overlapping membership linkage obviously results in a failure to utilize it to maximum potential.

Another linkage formed in this period illustrates a further lesson.

> There was an existing literacy program in the South End that was founded by a Black minister. It was about a block away. When we started ours, it was a competitive thing, but we were scrupulously honest about this. People would wander into our place having seen an ad about that place. I would

> walk them down the street and turn them over to the minister-director, if they were actually looking for his program. Well, I had all the wealth and they had very little, yo know, and yet I was treating them like an equal. They would say, "Why didn't you keep them, you have so much more than we do." I'd say, "He's answering an ad for your program." Eventually, they joined us—they went to the superintendent and said, "Can we join?" So we took them in. I knew that program would fold, but if I pushed them out of business, I would get enemies. We gave them space and let them operate their program separately down the hall, and then we began offering them small services. When their teachers didn't show up, I would put in a substitute. All of a sudden, we had it right here, and we had managed to take over the program and upgrade its capabilities without making a single enemy... . We got 20 to 30 students from this.

Through forthrightness the Albany program was thus able to effect the closest of all linkages with the above program—outright merger. In accomplishing this, both programs avoided the kind of pernicious competition which could only have harmed both.

It is now fall of 1965, and the Albany ABE program has grown to the point where it serves about 220 students. It is no longer small and it is no longer fledgling, but it is still a part-time evening program. Garrett Murphy's appointment as a full-time administrator was contingent upon the success of the welfare mothers' recruiting drive. Ten classes was the watershed. Furthermore:

> Of these 220, only 140 wanted night instruction. Eighty wanted day instruction and except for summers, we didn't have any place for it. So I went trotting down to the superintendent and said, "What am I going to do? I can probably get some rental money from the state. Do I have your permission to go around and start looking for a storefront?" He reached in his desk and pulled out some keys and said, "Here, you know that old school where the Black minister's program used to be before they joined you? You can have it."

The Albany ABE program was now a full-time, day operation, and its director was for the first time a full-time administrator.

Looking back to his part-time days, the director explains:

> As a part-timer, I was teaching skills classes at School 20 during the day. Fortunately it was in an elementary school and I managed to get my free period [just before] lunch, so I had from 11:30 to 1:00... . I used to bomb out of there every day at 11:30 and was down there meeting the welfare commissioners. . . I used to have lunch with this one or that. I used to tear out to the printer, go to the newspaper or drop down to the CAP storefront... . Another thing: it helps if you can get a part-time counselor who is a public school counselor during the day, because he has access to a phone and can contact agencies for you when you are tied up in class.

Not all linkages formed by the Albany program in the early period were either successful or lasting, however.

> In 1965-66 we began our program on the other side of town, where we set up satellite centers at three other schools in the North End, none of which exist any more. We just never made it. The one that was least successful I ran for two years and then cancelled it—just not enough interest. Another one in the North End closed because of urban renewal, and the last one closed when neighborhood problems reduced recruitment to a trickle.

Nevertheless, as certain co-sponsorships or referral linkages proved ineffective or withered on the vine, they were replaced with others. This points out that establishment and maintenance of inter-organizational relationships has to be a constant and continuous process; linkage networks are structures which constantly need to be rebuilt and repaired.

In 1966-67 the addition of a learning laboratory stimulated another developmental cycle in the Albany program.

A representative of the State Education Department called

> and said that we were going into learning laboratories. This made a big difference, because if the learning laboratory was to do what it was supposed to do, it would have to serve all the students, not just day students. So I had to move the night school which was still in the public school to our new place, which—as old and creaky as it was—was totally ours. It was the first time we had day and night activities in one building.

Albany was not the only New York program which received a learning laboratory from the state at this time. Syracuse and White Plains were similarly singled out. Though there are a number of reasons why these cities were selected, it is important to note that almost from its beginning, the Albany program has enjoyed a strong and highly beneficial relationship with the State Education Department. Undoubtedly this relationship has been partially a function of proximity—Albany being the state capital. Yet the relationship goes beyond the proximity factor. The director explains:

> We try to provide data to the State Education Department as fast as they want it. We serve as intelligence to them, as a place to experiment. We are usually known as a place where if you want to try out something special, we will turn around and bend over backwards to do it and get a report back rather than saying, "Oh, that will upset our program or wouldn't fit into our system" or something like that.

Clearly, an important reason for the close relationship between the Albany program and the State Education Department is that each agency values the services rendered to it by the other agency.

The establishment of nearly all inter-organizational relationships requires a quid pro quo from both the linking parties, for the most stable and lasting linkages are those where both parties benefit. Or to put it somewhat differently, the statement "I will do this for you if you will do

that for me" is the basis of nearly all linkage negotiations. The Albany program has closely followed this principle in its dealings with the State Education Department—with considerably positive results.

Just as the learning laboratory was coming to fruition, the Albany program began to experience one of the problems that periodically plagues even the largest and most secure ABE programs—recruitment.

> Classes were beginning to dwindle a bit and we were in the position of having to recruit again. The idea of knocking on the same doors we had already knocked on didn't seem like a good idea, so we had to find other ways to recruit. Just about that point, the Job Corps, Neighborhood Youth Corps, and Youth Centers were being set up. I fortunately hired the wife of the head of the Youth Opportunity Center and through her, I was able to get down to the Youth Opportunity Center and began to talk to the counselors about what we might do for them. And at this point we started to get referrals.

Thus, the decision was made to attack the recruitment problem by increasing the number of referral relationships with agencies.

A similar, and perhaps more important, referral linkage was established with the Employment Service about the same time.

> About six months after they got the Youth Opportunity Center operational, they set up a Human Resources Department of the Employment Service in the same building. The only test they were giving their clients to determine whether they were ready for employment was the General Aptitude Test Battery, which does not work below the 8th grade. People below the 8th grade showed up talentless and they were turned back into the streets. So I sold both the YOC and HRD counselors the basic idea to send people down to us who looked like they might be able to profit from training because of their initiative and motivation but were not meeting the GATB test norms. I said, "We will give them education, and when they have enough education we will send them back to you. Then, perhaps, they will be trainable."

The argument was convincing and self-evident, and an initial linkage was comparatively easy to establish. The history of the relationship, however, does not end there. Once the Employment Service had agreed to refer students, the relationship required further attention before students were referred to the ABE program in significant numbers.

> I got very friendly with these people. They began to send us a few students. Then one of their staff members did a study on people who went straight to job training and people who went after coming here first. She found that our people were doing better—staying in training longer and getting better grades. And she wrote this up as a report which was distributed throughout the Employment Service. So then they really started sending us people.

In this passage, two recurring themes of this developmental history are evident. The director has cemented the relationship, first by forming strong personal affiliations with persons in the linking agency and secondly by providing a service to his linking partner which clearly benefited it highly.

Though the linkage with the Employment Service was now stable and providing many students for the Albany Program, the relationship was still developing. More remained to be done.

> The students the Employment service sent us were still without stipend. I said, "When you send them to the Manpower Center, they get paid. When they come to us, they can't get paid. Can't we work something out?" So they looked around and they found something called individual referral money. In the past this money had been used to send people to beauty schools, business college—it was used to buy slots in occupational training. We convinced them if they really were going to serve the disadvantaged, they ought to buy slots in pre-vocational training, and the big pitch that worked was "We won't charge you any tuition. Your money will serve twice as many people—you need only pay income maintenance stipends."

Thus, following the "big pitch," the linkage produced not only students, but supportive services in the form of stipends as well. There was still more to come, however.

> Now the other cute thing we did at this point was to hire an employment counselor. We got a former Employment Service counselor. . .and the first thing she did was to set up a filing system which would interface perfectly with the filing system at the Employment Service. She did this mainly by adapting the Employment Service forms. . . .When the Employment Service called up for information on the people they had referred, we even knew the question they would ask next because we were reading off the same form.

As we have seen, the Employment Service linkage was first solidified through the formation of close personal relationships and then further solidified by the presence of a strong quid pro quo. Now we see that even the bureaucratic procedures of the linking partners have been interfaced.

Through the period during which the Youth Opportunity Center and the Employment Service linkages were being developed, previously established referral linkages were constantly being maintained and repaired when necessary. A decrease in the number of students referred from an agency, for example, signalled a need to bolster the relationship. Similarly, the loss of an important contact in an agency stimulated the director to seek and establish new contacts. For example:

> Meanwhile we were still doing business with Welfare and trying to get the best kinds of relationships going. My mother was getting ready to retire, so I had to shore things up down there. There was one case worker who had this area around here. I used to make calls with him. He is now Deputy Commissioner of Social Services for the state.

Thus, we see that one of the director's personal agency contacts, a case worker who had been of great assistance to the ABE program, rose in the Social

Services bureaucracy to the level of Deputy Commissioner. Building interagency relationships through personal associations is like putting money in the bank; interest accrues as the power and influence of your contacts increase.

> Contacts tend to move right along. There have been a number of them who have moved. Soon you find that you are getting support for your programs at the policy level. At a budget hearing someone says, "What about this program? Should we keep it?" And one of your old contacts says, "Oh, yeah, you ought to keep <u>that</u>."

It is now 1968, a very important year in terms of interagency linkages. It is the year of the job fair.

> The Black urban ministry here was the original sponsor for the National Alliance of Businessmen to come in and talk about the NAB program, and one of the first things they wanted to do was to hold a big job fair. I was not invited, but I had by then hired a recruiter. This was a Black man from Boston who had not been in the area long. I did not want to hire him. "You do not even know the neighborhood," I said, and he replied, "I've been around enough to know there are only four families in all of Albany and they are all related." So I let him go out and he started to bring people in. He worked well with the Black ministries. What he used to do for intelligence was to go to the rent office. The man who ran the rent office knew everything, because he sat in this little storefront all day and everybody came in and told him their troubles. He told my recruiter about the job fair. Manpower was invited, and the Urban Center, but we weren't. But I went anyway. Because of my recruiter's political machinations, he got me right on the dais and I made a little speech. As a result of that speech, and from nowhere, I got to be on the executive committee.

Because of the intelligence information transmitted by the recruiter and partially because of his behind-the-scenes maneuvers on the ABE program's behalf, Murphy now held a decision-making position on a very important community coordinating organization—the job fair executive committee.

> The men I met were representatives of every major business in

> the area. A job fair was arranged in the Armory and we had one booth with a sign that said "Adult Education." I went around to each booth, met the business and industry representatives, chatted with them for a while and said, "Hey, do you have anybody at this fair you think might be worthwhile, someone you would like to help but can't because he is not educated enough? Please don't send him away, send him to me." We set up an agreement with the Employment Service. When people tried to leave the job fair, people would ask, "How did you do? Did you see the employer you wanted? Did you get a job? If not, why?" If they found undereducated people they would send them to the Employment Service booth. I knew every single Employment Service counselor there, and they would send the potential students to me.

Since the first job fair was so successful, a second fair was held the following year. Because of the leadership the director had assumed at the first fair, his responsibilities and leadership were expanded in the second.

> For the second job fair I was designated liaison with the community as well as being on the executive committee. There was a great deal of hostility then, and there were militant groups. . . .They wanted someone they could trust for community liaison, so I got the job. I set up bus lines for the job fair. I had the Unitarian Church and the most militant group working together as a taxi service.

Through the two job fairs in 1968 and 1969, the Albany program was able to expand its linkage network to business and industry, previously untapped areas. These linkages subsequently developed into productive referral relationships. Moreover, the job fairs enabled the ABE program to increase its visibility and credibility within the surrounding community.

In 1969 rumors began to circulate that the ABE program was to lose its facility. A nearby public school was becoming quite overcrowded and needed the space for an annex. For this reason and because the physical plant did not really suit ABE needs, Murphy began to look for a new site.

> We were given an offer to move next door, which was an old supermarket that was being refurbished. I had plans prepared

> and was all ready to go, and the neighborhood groups with whom I had worked so well over the years, they knifed me and said, "That would make a great teen center. In fact, if you don't relinquish your plans and give it to us, we are going to tell every kid in the South End that that could be their teen center except for you."

A fight for the supermarket space was a fight that the director could not win. If he managed to secure the space, he would alienate the community. The quest for space continued, therefore, and ultimately paid off. In the meantime:

> A local priest friend with whom I worked offered us space in another (and slightly better) abandoned elementary school. He used only the office as headquarters for Big Brother. The Mayor heard we were moving there and had the interior painted so we would have a decent temporary location until in Spring of '69... .I suddenly found out that this [another vacant supermarket ideally located in the heart of the disadvantaged community] was available. I came down and looked at it. I drew plans and brought it to the superintendent and he said, "Fine." I said, "What about walls?" He said, "It's as big as a prairie in there. Oh, talk to the mayor." So I called the mayor. I said, "Beautiful, I love it, what about fixing it up?" The mayor said, "O.K., we'll do it for you." He sent in an architect and the architect came in and said, "I've got a budget of $100,000; let's sit down and work," and we drew up the school.
>
> It was visibility that did it for us, plus the fact that through all the riot years, this place stayed cool. People were getting places. When people were complaining "We can't get entrē to this or that," we were working our tails off to get it for them. We certainly were not wholly successful, but I think the mayor realized the importance of our service. That is why we were successful in getting the space.

The Albany Adult Learning Center has at this point moved into its present facility, and our developmental history comes to a close. Yet, though our account has ended, program development continues and is unlikely to cease until the mission of adult basic education has been accomplished. There are plans to move into the field of educational technology, for example. The Albany program has secured a well-equipped television studio and hopes to offer ABE through

cable TV. There are also plans to add a vocational education component to the program.

The development of the Albany program has been portrayed as an upward spiraling process, often cyclical in nature, and fueled by inter-organizational relationships. Granted, the Albany ABE program has enjoyed a favorable environment for program development. A sizable untapped population of potential students exists in Albany, and special state and local funds have been available. Yet, to some degree, these resources and others exist in most communities. The problem comes in securing them to the benefit of the adult education program.

In the Albany program, as in the White Plains and Bergen Community College programs, linkages became the conduit for the influx of resources. Referral linkages and cosponsorships provided students for the program. Linkages with the public schools and the mayor's office ultimately resulted in the facility which permits comprehensive, full-time program operation. Linkages with community-based organizations promoted program visibility and community acceptance. As the program developed it was able to serve its clients more effectively—a dynamic which helped establish the program's credibility. This credibility subsequently resulted in a very favorable public image that was quite helpful when establishing other resource-producing inter-organizational relationships. The upward spiral began to move faster.

We have seen that the basis for Albany's linkage relationships lay in the program's ability to form close personal associations with agency personnel and in its ability to render valuable services to its linking partners. Over time, many linkages grew from incipient referral linkages to intensive rela-

tionships that produce not only students, but stipends and other supportive services as well. We have also seen that the establishment and maintenance of linkages is necessarily an ongoing process requiring considerable skill in negotiation.

We trust that by this point the reader has been convinced that a program of community linkages is indeed valuable. In trying to provide this point we have shown that through linkage relationships with other agencies in its community, an ABE program can recruit and retain students and secure supportive services, increased operating revenues, and program visibility. We have also documented our assertion that inter-organizational linkages are excellent developmental building blocks. What we have not done, however, is to explain how to establish and maintain a program of linkages. That task remains to be accomplished in the next section.

SECTION II

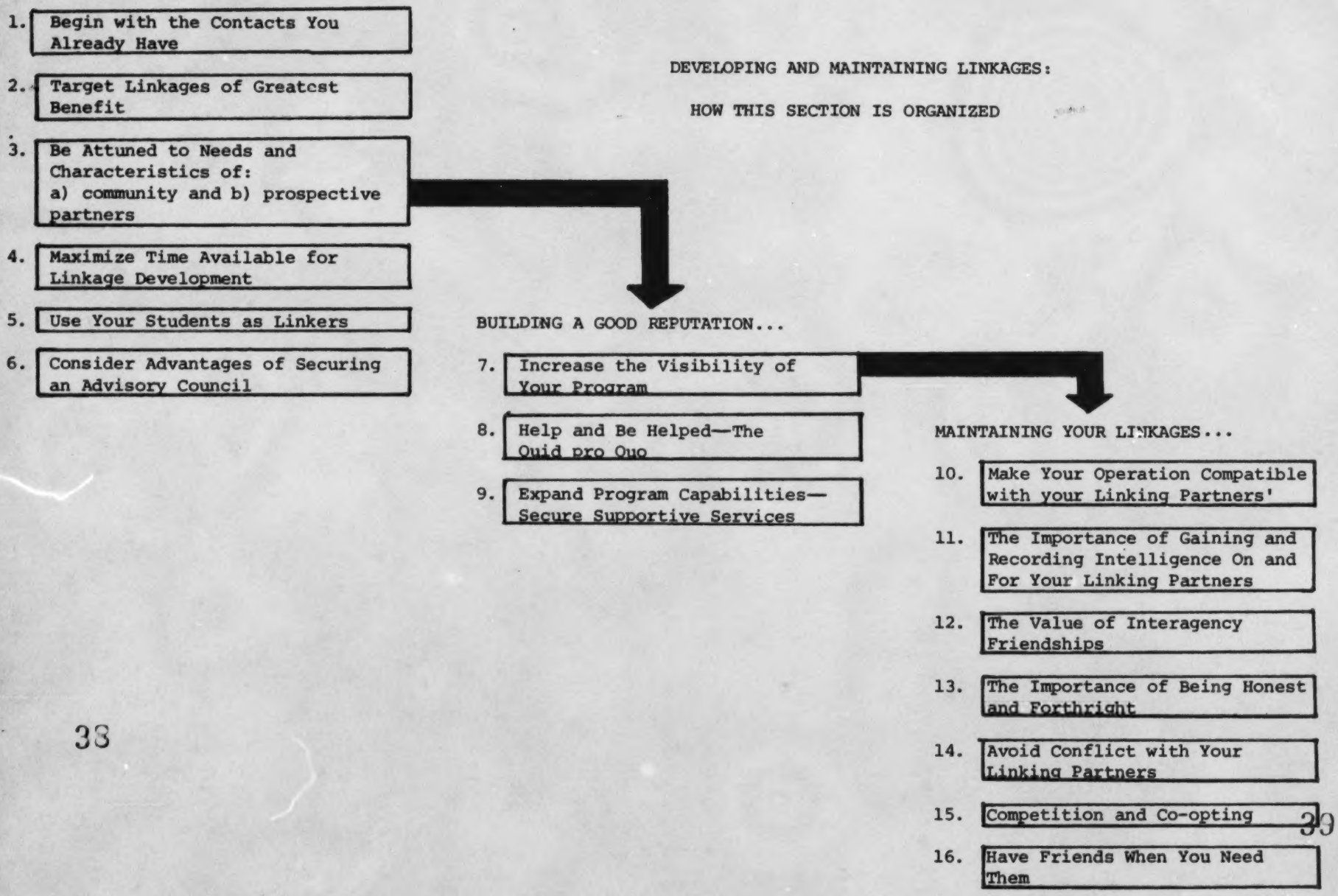
HOW TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN LINKAGES

Most ABE programs, both large and small, develop some community linkages. Quite often, however, these are informal affairs that seem to happen without much prior planning. They are relationships that an ABE program just falls into. A program of community linkages, on the other hand, implies much more than this. It implies a conscious, coordinated effort that is well planned and executed.

This second section of the Manual, about developing and maintaining linkages, presents a numbered series of principles useful in establishing a program of community linkages. These are not hard and fast rules, and their sequence here is not absolute. Rather, they are rules of thumb garnered from the experience and insight of the ABE directors and staff who were interviewed for this publication. The following chart is an overview of the process of developing and maintaining linkages with other community agencies; it provides a guide to the organization of this section.

DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING LINKAGES:

HOW THIS SECTION IS ORGANIZED


GETTING STARTED...
1. Begin with the Contacts You Already Have
2. Target Linkages of Greatest Benefit
3. Be Attuned to Needs and Characteristics of: a) community and b) prospective partners
4. Maximize Time Available for Linkage Development
5. Use Your Students as Linkers
6. Consider Advantages of Securing an Advisory Council
BUILDING A GOOD REPUTATION...
7. Increase the Visibility of Your Program
8. Help and Be Helped—The Quid pro Quo
9. Expand Program Capabilities—Secure Supportive Services
MAINTAINING YOUR LINKAGES...
10. Make Your Operation Compatible with your Linking Partners'
11. The Importance of Gaining and Recording Intelligence On and For Your Linking Partners
12. The Value of Interagency Friendships
13. The Importance of Being Honest and Forthright
14. Avoid Conflict with Your Linking Partners
15. Competition and Co-opting
16. Have Friends When You Need Them

GETTING STARTED...

1. BEGIN WITH THE CONTACTS YOU ALREADY HAVE

In order to establish a linkage, an ABE program needs a contact—someone who can gain access to the organization the ABE program would like to link with and vouch for the integrity of ABE. Capitalize on the contacts you already have; most directors have many more than they realize. For example, suppose that through a personal affiliation (membership in a social club or church) an ABE director has met and become friendly with the manager of a local factory. That manager may be willing to commit his organization to referring students to the ABE program for education that will be useful in job upgrading. Since both the factory and its employees will benefit, the ABE director is doing his friend a direct favor. Or the ABE director's church group might be willing to supply space or volunteer tutors. ABE directors, counselors, and students will probably have similar contacts useful to the program.

In addition to enlisiting the help of personal friends, there are several other excellent sources of initial contacts. The staff or friends of the ABE program may have held previous employment in an organization with which linkages might profitably be established. Such people can be excellent initiators, for they know how the organization operates and they may retain close personal ties there. One of the people interviewed had previously worked for a local CAP agency and consequently had substantial knowledge of the in's and out's of community politics. Furthermore, he enjoyed many friendships with the staff of agencies serving low-income groups (the target population shared by the ABE

program). Similarly, Walter Hecht, director of the Bergen Community College Adult Learning Center, discovered that a counselor he had just hired used to work for the Employment Service. Her friendships with former co-workers and her knowledge of that agency's operation helped her coordinate the joint efforts of her former employer and present employer. A productive linkage was the result. And where the ABE director and his staff are part-time, their primary employment as high school teachers or guidance counselors, for example, provides them with useful contacts in the school system.

And finally, relatives should not be ignored as an important resource in cultivating inter-organizational linkages. The reader will probably remember Garrett Murphy's account of how important his mother was in establishing a linkage with the Social Service Department.

But once potential contacts have been identified, how can you capitalize on them? Which types of linkages are going to be most productive for your program?

2. TARGET LINKAGES OF GREATEST BENEFIT

A comprehensive strategy for Targeting Linkages of Greatest Benefit might include the following criteria, suggested by directors who have successfuly used the linkage approach to program development:

- What is your program's largest, most consistent need? More students, for instance? Identify the need and then seek linkage relationships addressed to that need.
- Which agencies in your community are politically and socially active and highly visible as well? If you can forge a linkage with just a few active and visible agencies, others will follow suit.

- Which agencies serve the same clientele as your program? Can you become part of their delivery system of service to the client? For instance, can you supply the basic education component in a comprehensive plan for job upgrading?

3. BE ATTUNED TO THE NEEDS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMMUNITY AND OF YOUR PROSPECTIVE LINKING PARTNERS

In negotiating for a linkage, the ABE program's biggest selling point is the service it provides—a service which is of interest to other organizations because it can help them meet their own needs. If the major negotiating point is "My service can meet your needs," the ABE program must have a clear understanding of what potential linker's needs actually are. Does a social service agency or a business need basic education for clients or employees, for instance

There are several ways to collect this kind of information, the first being by informal research. The director of one program, for example, diligently reads her local weekly newspaper. Whenever she spots news of a local organization, she jots down the name of the organization, who its director is, and what problems it is experiencing. Some ABE programs have conducted needs surveys for other organizations in order to find out whether ABE could help them. Another way to determine the needs of organizations is by feedback from linkage networks. Thus one director receives most of his intelligence data from the directors of other agencies whom he meets at various meetings. Finally, there are the ABE students who are members of other organizations. They are an excellent and often neglected source of information.

Aside from data on the needs of organizations, there are other types of important information. For example, are the kind of students that a given

organization might refer to you the kind of students you want? Is your potential linker so unstable that the linkage is likely to be terminated after you have put a great deal of work into it? How much of your own time and program resources will have to be spent in establishing and maintaining the relationship? Are the goals of your potential linking partner compatible with ABE? If you establish the linkage and it turns sour, will you be able to terminate gracefully?

In general, an axiom advanced by one of the directors might serve to guide the preliminary determination of the needs and characteristics of various agencies: that "helping" organizations in particular, whether public or private, are constantly seeking access to a pool of low-income clients. Service to the poor is their job and they, too, play the "numbers game" for continued funding, for legitimacy in the eyes of their constituents, and for a host of other reasons. They are seeking the "disadvantaged" and the ABE program has ready access to the population they are seeking. ABE is the key.

4. MAXIMIZE TIME AVAILABLE FOR LINKAGE DEVELOPMENT

Renewing old friendships and making new ones, gathering information about the needs and capabilities of other agencies, and all the other activities required for identifying and then developing beneficial linkages require a lot of time. How can an ABE director undertake all this extra work, particularly if he is part-time? Delegation of responsibility and plenty of ingenuity will be required. One of the people interviewed had this to say about how he bolstered linkages for his evening ABE program while he worked a daytime job:

> As a part-time ABE coordinator [who worked in the day schools], I managed to get my free period jammed up next to lunch and permission to go out at lunch time, giving me a block of time during the operating day to go out to the Employment Service, to here, to there. I could not have existed if I had been in a high school with a 22-minute lunch period; I could never have gotten it done. I used to tear out to the printer, go to the newspaper, go to the Welfare Office, and drop down to the Community Action Program storefront—you know, run in there, get my work done, and get back.

Two of the directors interviewed also remarked on the value of hiring a part-time guidance counselor who works in the schools and therefore has a phone on the desk. He or she can make calls on behalf of the ABE program during the business day.

In this and all phases of linkage development, a strategy is needed. This Manual's suggestions are necessarily limited in number and in specificity. The hope is that the two examples given of how to "maximize time" will suggest others, stimulating the reader to brainstorm some strategies with his staff: "Well, no, we can't do the thing with hiring the guidance counselor in the public schools, but maybe we could set up a telephone brigade. My sister-in-law would be glad to make some preliminary calls for us if she was told what information to ask for... ."

5. USE YOUR STUDENTS AS LINKERS

Students publicize your program to family, friends, their local community (e.g., church and social groups) and to other organizations as well. First, let us consider how students assist the recruitment effort. Let us examine Tables I through III on enrollment sources in Section One and, for each of the three programs, collapse several related categories such as: Relatives, Friends,

Former Students, and Word-of-Mouth (the latter would represent such contacts as friend-of-a-friend). This composite category of enrollment sources accounts for 30 percent of the total enrollment at the Bergen Community College Adult Learning Center; 30 percent at the Albany Adult Learning Center; and 20 percent at the White Plains ABE program.

Charles Morgan, Assistant to the Dean of Community Services at Bergen Community College, comments on what might be called "self-referrals" of people who know someone who has been enrolled in the ABE program or who learn of the program's reputation second- or third-hand. He says that "self-referrals" are another important index of program effectiveness. By collecting source of enrollment data during the intake interview, an ABE program can monitor the effects of its own reputation on enrollment and, indirectly, obtain a measure of student satisfaction with the program. These tallies constitute the kind of "success data" that impress linking partners and those who make funding decisions. Success data help build a compelling case for further linkages.

Students who are working while they attend ABE classes can facilitate the formation of linkage relationships by alerting their employers to the benefits the ABE program can offer. Students can also provide valuable intelligence data to the director, giving him a sense of which organizations might be "ripe" for linkages. For instance, a practical nurse who had attended classes at one of our case study programs told her new employers about the ABE program. The hospital was so impressed by her enthusiasm and on-the-job performance that it initiated a linkage to provide for released-time ABE classes for some of its other employees.

6. CONSIDER ADVANTAGES OF SECURING ADVISORY COUNCIL

An advisory council can be an extremely valuable resource. For example, an advisory council can:

- Help you identify and select which organizations to approach for linkage
- Help identify and secure community resources that might benefit your program
- Program ABE in your community
- Help you to fight battles that you could not fight on your own

In selecting an advisory council there are two things you might bear in mind. First, select members from organizations which have the means to assist ABE. In this way you are setting the stage for several beneficial interagency linkages. For example, asking the director of the Employment Service to sit on your advisory council will go a long way towards ensuring a cooperative relationship with the agency. Second, do not fail to ask you advisory council for help when you need it. They can accomplish things you cannot. Suppose, for example, that your program is threatened by a policy being promulgated by the superintendent of schools. If you are employed by the public schools, you might have a hard time fighting that policy; since your advisory council is unconstrained, it might be able to apply the needed pressure on behalf of your program.

People will be willing to serve on your advisory council because of good will and because of the expectation that the ABE program will be able to help them meet their own needs. The growth of contacts can be exponential with an advisory council of only three members. In fact, the advice from the directors

we interviewed is to keep the council small in the beginning as you concentrate on building a few key linkages. You can always recruit more members as you grow. These directors point out that too large a council is unwieldy. That is, there is a risk that if he is substantially outnumbered, the ABE director may be unable to set appropriate limits on the members' role. In their enthusiasm they may try to dictate curriculum or policy.

The following kinds of people are suggested for eventual membership on the council: staff members (or the director, if you can get him) from the Social Service, Employment Service, Urban League or other civic betterment groups addressing the needs of your student population. Representatives from volunteer associations, the news media, and college representatives (where appropriate) are also important. Labor representatives—contractors and builders particularly; businessmen, certainly including the major industry of the community and area manpower coordinators, can help. And last, but by no means least, the advisory council should include ABE students—especially recent graduates of the program.

BUILDING A GOOD REPUTATION. . .

Visibility and credibility, being known and trusted, are key attributes of a successful ABE program. Let us examine how these key attributes relate specifically to linkage-building.

At first it might seem that the next item, #7, which concerns public relations, has nothing to do with linkages at all. A justifiably skeptical reader might say: "But this is just advertising! And I don't have very much

to advertise right now, which is why I want to build up my program with the linkage approach." Well, surely this skeptical reader has something to advertise. If he were not convinced that his ABE program can make a difference to the lives of at least some of his students, he would not continue as a director; he would be out pounding the pavement looking for another part-time job.

The advice from Elliot Lethbridge, Coordinator of the White Plains Adult Literacy Program at Rochambeau, and from other directors who started small and made it big is to avoid the "no win" mentality. Every ABE program has the potential of being able to offer some sort of service to its clients and, consequently, service to other organizations which work with the same clients. The director, aided by his staff and, possibly, his advisory council, determines what his program has to offer in return for the goods and services of linking partners. The bargains that his program will be able to strike with other organizations represent the quid pro quo, discussed in Item 8.

The point is that you undertake the activities of Items 7, Increasing the Visibility of your Program, and 8, Help and Be Helped, simultaneously; you publicize your program in order to secure linking partners (#7) while you supply service to your partners (#8). A successful linkage will result in your being able to supply more, and better, services. This in turn means more visibility. Greater visibility means greater opportunity for linkages. And so on, in a spiral of successful program development. Item 9 is part of this dynamic; it concerns how you can expand your program capabilities to secure supportive services for your students and how supportive services enhance your program capabilities.

7. INCREASE THE VISIBILITY OF YOUR PROGRAM

The goal here is to familiarize interested parties with the ABE operation. The public in general and prospective linking partners in particular should know about the ABE program:

- What it is doing, how and where: the instructional set-up, including curriculum and program goals; teaching and learning for adults, and how the process differs from the education of children; the facilities, even if rented or borrowed.
- Who the ABE student is.
- Why ABE is so important: the difference basic education can make in the lives of individual adults; the value to the community as well.

and

- What more might be done by the ABE program if it had the assistance it needs.

Hosting meetings at your own facility, if you are fortunate enough to have one of your own, was mentioned by several of the directors as a good way of promoting program visibility. Even if the ABE program operates out of borrowed facilities (a high school, a church basement), people should see your operation first-hand. And it is interesting that everyone we interviewed mentioned the importance of food: serving coffee and doughnuts to visitors at an evening meeting; having lunch; hosting a breakfast meeting with the people you would like to get to know better, whether newspaper reporters or caseworkers. On-site or off, "breaking bread with the staff of other agencies is a tried-and-true method of promoting interagency linkages," remarks Elliot Lethbridge. Attending cocktail parties and other social gatherings of

community leaders, agency staff, news media, and/or politicians was deemed as of almost equal importance to attendance at more formal committee meetings.

Getting yourself or your staff on a few key committees, such as those dealing with area manpower needs and local employment opportunities, and on the boards of civic betterment associations, such as the Urban League or Chamber of Commerce, are important ways of promoting the visibility of your program. It is also important to make sure that the ABE program is listed in all available directories of community resources.

All those interviewed had discovered the public relations value of an ABE graduation ceremony. And, as pointed out by Lois Marshall, Dean of Community Services at Bergen Community College, such a ceremony is more than just a publicity gimmick. Most students in an ABE program have attended other people's graduation ceremonies—their children's perhaps—and have heard about other people's high school reunions. These adults, therefore, are delighted by a ceremony where they and their achievements can be publicly recognized. Family and friends can be invited to this festive occasion. And in subsequent years, when they attend the graduations of other ABE students, they have a reunion as alumni.*

Evelyn Wolfe, a guidance counselor at the White Plains program, had similar comments on the multiple values of a graduation ceremony, which has become a tradition there. So did Garrett Murphy, director of the Albany Learning Center. At the Albany program's first graduation ceremony, he made babysitting arrangements for the students' younger children, invited some key people (agency

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* See Item 5 for the contributions that alumni can make to an ABE program and Item 6 regarding alumni on an advisory council.

cosponsors, a few local politicians, and the press), and held a little reception beforehand at which:

> My kids came and served, and we got some petit fours and things like that. We got the nicest possible place we could in the school building [at the time, the program was still borrowing classrooms]. . . . Everyone was walking around talking to each other, and there was a genuine feeling of cameraderie. The student felt that this was something good, and they gave good vibes to the reporters.

An ABE graduation ceremony has human interest. Although some people might be understandably reluctant to "play up" events like this, it is done not only for the benefit of the press but for anyone who needs to be convinced that adult basic education can make an important difference in the lives of individuals. This conviction is what makes a person willing to get involved in an ABE program, whether as a student or as a cosponsor.

Prospective students are attracted to the program and, once enrolled, willing to persist only if they believe that their participation will bring them closer to the attainment of their goals. Thus, one director who had received letters of appreciation from graduates of the ABE program got permission from some of the writers to reprint and display their letters. These were a sort of testimonial, posted in the front window and the waiting area of the adult learning center. There, these letters—filled with honest pride and references to better jobs and higher education—could be read by people seeking information or preparing to enter the program. And these same letters—again with the writers' permission—were included in kits of materials about the program that were distributed to prospective linking partners, press, cosponsors, and those who make important policy and funding decisions.

What might be called success data are needed by supporters of the ABE program who are trying to persuade their organizations to establish a linkage. The friend-of-ABE needs some solid facts and figures in hand when he approaches his boss to say "Let's team up with the basic education program. Look what they've been able to do... ." Such success data might include: reading score gains, pass rate on the high school equivalency test (GEDT), employment figures—whatever the program's strong points are. Comparative data, of the type that shows adults performing better at a given task or job after enrollment in ABE, is especially compelling. For example, because of a comparative study previously cited in the case study of the Albany program, it received a substantial increase in student referrals from the Employment Service and was also able to secure stipending for these students enrolled in ABE classes. The study showed that, compared to people who were referred directly to the Manpower Center, students who spent some time in the ABE program before going to the training center had higher grades there as well as better and longer attendance.

Of course, no ABE program would profit by a bad press, but the relative importance of a good press seems to vary from community to community. (The differences may reflect the extent to which the local press influences the allocation of resources by politicians, major agencies, and opinion leaders.) One director remarked, "I've never seen the press as too big a thing. There's a disinclination for the press to run constant pieces about our program." His principle: do not wear out your welcome; request coverage of major events only. This director also noted that his local newspaper does not have a large readership among the ABE target population and is therefore not useful in

recruitment. In contrast, another director interviewed has been able to get free space in the local paper for advertising the ABE program.

Another director, to whom the press is very important, talked about the fine line between sophistication and slickness in dealing with the press and other media. Sophistication encompasses the recognition that at least some reporters, accustomed to bureaucratic defensiveness, will adopt a very aggressive approach that can be softened and directed only by an ingratiating candor on the part of the director:

> If you just say, "Well, here is our thing," the guys are looking for a story and they start probing. If you come out and tell your story first, to a newspaper, TV or radio reporter, you give them enough information so that they start asking questions about that information. They do not start digging much further; you have given them enough to deal with. . . Tell them very matter-of-factly what's going on, what may be of interest.
>
> But on the other hand, they hate to have you write their stories for them, you know. You try and over-program them and they resent it.

This director also suggested that requests for help by the press (e.g., a subtle "plug" for the ABE program during a recruitment drive) be presented as exactly what they are—requests, not demands. Appeals to a reporter's better nature—what some might call his ego—might impell him to say, "Yes, I think your program's got a good thing going here, and I think I can help you get people for it."

Finally, it should be noted that the publicity clout of linking partners often helps increase the visibility of ABE. For example, a large utility company that is cosponsoring classes will turn its paid PR staff loose on the cooperative program and generate far more publicity than could the ABE director himself.

8. HELP AND BE HELPED. . . THE QUID PRO QUO

At least during the initial stages of linkage development, the ABE director must serve as his own matchmaker. (An advisory council also performs this crucial function.) Does the prospect of courting several agencies make the director a little nervous? "I mean, what have I got to offer? Why should the State Employment Service, with its hundreds of employees, want to get involved with me?" This is the "no win" attitude cropping up again. In order to help the diffident director identify the nature of the quid pro quo so as to make the case for linkage involvement, the following broad categories are presented. The guiding principle: in return for goods and services, the ABE program helps its linking partners fulfill their own missions by better meeting their own organizational needs.

Basic education for adults is, of course, first and foremost. To say this is to state the obvious, but underpinning it is a practical reality as well as a social-educational truth. The reality is that if another agency undertook to provide basic education for its clients, it would have to expend enormous amounts of time, effort, and operating funds. Why should it do so when your program stands ready to provide those services to the agency clients at a fraction of the cost that would be entailed in an expensive gearing-up?

Successful completion of an ABE program is seldom enough to meet the goals of most students. For example, assume that an undereducated student wants to become a nurse and enrolls in ABE because she must get more education to be admitted into a practical nursing training program. But once she has successfully completed basic education training—what then? She still has to

get into job training, and after that she will need the services of a placement agency. If after getting employment she decides to work towards a RN degree, she will need still more education and training. The point is that ABE is necessary for her to reach her goal, but not sufficient. Likewise, neither the practical nurse training program nor the placement agency alone can solve her problem.

The social-educational truth, then, is that ABE (like the services of most other social service agencies) is almost always instrumental in meeting students' or clients' goals, but can seldom accomplish the job in isolation. This is where the quid pro quo comes in. By linking with an organization which needs ABE for its clients, your program is helping that organization improve its service. Likewise, in forming that relationship you gain access to a service which by benefiting ABE students, helps your program to do a better job. As director, therefore, you can explain how ABE will help your prospective linking partner and improve the quality of service provided by both of you.

Another thing that the ABE program can offer is the expertise of the director and staff. One example already alluded to is the advice that ABE practitioners can offer other agencies on the selection and interpretation of test instruments that are valid for use with undereducated adults. Another example: an ABE program can assist in the pre- and in-service training of staff of other agencies. The Albany program, for instance, helped a local college set up a learning lab of its own for remedial and developmental work, and in return the college earmarked several HEOP scholarships for high school equivalency graduates of the Albany program. A half-day visitation to the White Plains ABE program is now part of the pre-service orientation for Social

Services caseworkers. If an ABE program has successfully developed an instructional unit on, say, "how to do your best on tests," the unit might be exported—presented by ABE staff at another agency's classroom site (e.g., a prison or a civil service prep class). This might lead eventually to co-sponsorship of classes.

Providing free testing for agencies referring their clients to ABE is another service that all three programs studied are able to supply as one of their contributions to quid pro quo arrangements. Free testing is, however, a complex and expensive enterprise that could be undertaken only on a very limited basis early on in a program's expansion and development. One director of a very large program calculated that he currently spends approximately $6000 per year for test materials and $9000 for a full-time test administrator's salary—and it's money well spent in terms of the number of students it brings in. Another director who also provides free testing points out that not everyone who is tested actually enrolls in the program. He estimates that of the 233 students his program tested during a five-month period, 80 percent were referred for free testing by other agencies. Of the 233 total, 63 did not require basic education; of the 170 remaining, 136 enrolled in ABE classes.

Providing feedback to linking partners is a duty of the ABE program that undertakes linkage relationships. We can do little more here than discuss the what and the why of feedback; the how is covered briefly under record keeping in Item 11. The rationale for providing feedback to the linking partner is that agencies which refer students or cosponsor classes require information about the clients they share with the ABE program in order to maintain their own records and to provide better service to these clients. A representative

example might be useful.

A linking partner like the Employment Service, for instance, secures basic education for its students as part, but only part, of an overall training sequence. Therefore, estimates of, or limits on, the time spent in the ABE program are necessary. Within that time frame, the Employment Service or CETA office must monitor the following data on its clients:

- Academic progress. If the entry-level job for which the client is receiving training requires 8th grade equivalency, is the client making satisfactory progress toward his academic goal? If not, the training sequence may be disrupted, because the client will not achieve the required academic proficiencies in the time allocated. The referring agency must be notified.

- Attendance. This is an obvious requirement, legally mandated if stipending is provided.

- Motivation, the client's view of his own progress, etc. Communication between the agency and the ABE counselor is required here.

The Albany Learning Center uses time cards to monitor and to feed back data on the attendance of referral clients, most of whom attend on a flexible scheduling basis. The cards are color-coded according to the "sponsor" agency (funding source); this way, they can be sorted more easily. There are, incidentally, secondary benefits to this system. It can be argued that punching in and out, onerous as it may sometimes be, is good preparation for on-the-job punctuality. In addition, a well-stamped time card can serve as solid evidence of a client's "sticktuitiveness"; on several occasions, counselors have presented attendance data to make a case for the client's motivation and readiness for additional or more advanced training.

Feedback on clients referred by a therapeutic program—ex-addicts,

mentally retarded, or emotionally disturbed—differs from feedback to job training or business-oriented organizations in its increased emphasis on the client's psychological and emotional status. It is obvious that much of this type of feedback must be supplied by counselors. Person-to-person feedback is expensive and must be reckoned against the linkage's benefit to the ABE program. But, as Elliot Lethbridge remarked as he considered the increase in operating revenues made possible by such linkages, "If you're going to jump in the water, your elbow gets wet too."

Even for a linking partner that does not refer clients directly to the ABE program but supplies goods and services in a donor relationship, feedback must be provided. These data are useful to the organization that must account for the expenditure of its resources—that must justify its support of the ABE effort. In these instances, "success data" are appropriate feedback along with an overview of program activities: number of students currently in the program, referral and funding sources obtained through linkages, and so forth.

9. EXPAND PROGRAM CAPABILITIES — SECURE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

An ABE program eager to attract more referral students will expand the range of learning experiences it offers in order to be able to serve a more diversified clientele. The expansion is accomplished in various ways, of which adding to the curriculum is perhaps the most obvious. For instance, one of the programs we studied found that the "world of work" unit it had developed gained admiration and a greater number of referrals from Social Services.

Sometimes it is necessary to get legal sanction—certification—in order to recruit or get referrals for special categories of students for whom funding

and supportive services are provided. The Albany program was instrumental in securing a ruling that ABE classes in New York State are "veterans approved." Under that ruling, a veteran can be stipended while working for a high school equivalency diploma; such study is in addition to, not in place of, the higher education benefits to which he is entitled. (Note that it may be possible for your program to obtain from the local office of the Veterans Administration a periodic "Disadvantaged Dischargees" list. This list supplies names and addresses of the vets in your area who have not graduated from high school.)

Another landmark ruling in favor of ABE in New York State was the State Employment Service decision to certify basic education as a pre-vocational phase of the vocational training process for people drawing unemployment insurance. Until that ruling, someone drawing unemployment insurance was not permitted to attend ABE classes even if his lack of basic education was what prevented him from obtaining or holding a job. ABE had not been regarded as properly "vocational," the only regular activity permitted for someone receiving unemployment compensation.

A third example is drawn from an area where legal problems persist because local regulations vary widely. This concerns the arrangements necessary to enroll recent high school dropouts in ABE classes; school systems are somewhat wary because they fear a mass exodus from the high schools. The Bergen Community College Adult Learning Center has worked out a formal agreement with local high schools including a waiver provision. This provision informs the high school of a student's expressed interest in high school equivalency and provides the option of having the student referred back to the high school.

Formal negotiation and rigorous adherence to the terms of the agreement prevent the development of rivalry and bad feeling.

A variety of administrative arrangements may be necessary. Some organizations that are ready to cosponsor classes and/or stipend students are working with clients who—for various reasons—cannot come to the central ABE facility. A satellite operation is necessary—prisons or sheltered workshops are salient examples. If an ABE program can make the necessary arrangements, it stands to increase its enrollment and secure additional funds. One ingenious arrangement has been worked out by the Bergen Community College Adult Learning Center for clients of a drug rehabilitation program. Clients undergoing detoxification in a hospital or treatment facility are not yet ready to join the general population in relatively unstructured learning situations. They are, however, anxious to get a head start on their studies for the high school equivalency exam. Therefore, preliminary testing is conducted on-site by drug rehabilitation counselors trained in the use of Learning Center instruments (survey, diagnostic, etc.). The test results are then sent to the Learning Center, which issues a prescription and lends self-instructional materials to these inmates, who start the program while still undergoing treatment. When they leave the facility, they are able to join the Learning Center classes with their individualized programs already in progress.

Finally, it should be pointed out that part-time ABE programs should consider the most significant and difficult of all expansions of program capabilities, and that is a full-time (day as well as evening) operation. One director presented the argument this way:

A full-time instructional capability makes you strong. In fact, it's a necessity in dealing with some of the stipend-paying agencies.

Another director added:

I knew that I would need a full-time capability in order to compete. The moment I did, I began to be looked at as more of a resource. Because most of these stipended programs and these total plans for rehabilitation—if they're predicated on any kind of stipend, then your program must be full-time because somebody along the line will balk at paying a stipend to someone going to school for only 15 hours per week.

MAINTAINING LINKAGES. . .

10. MAKE YOUR OPERATION COMPATIBLE WITH YOUR LINKING PARTNERS'

The concept of compatibility may be best explained by a linkage-chain analogy. It is easier to join together two chains of the same size and construction than it is to splice a gold watch chain to the anchor chain of a battleship. Similarly, if the operating procedures of your program closely parallel those of your linking partners, a much more stable and efficient relationship will result. A previously cited example may further explain what we mean:

We got an Employment Service counselor who was looking for another job... . The first thing she did was set up a filing system which would interface perfectly with the filing system at the Employment Service. She did this mainly by adapting [their] forms and putting them in our ditto machines. When [they] called up for information...we even knew what question they would ask next because we were reading off the same form.

We were really swinging because she knew every nook and cranny of the Employment Service. She could tell me which counselors generally referred out; which ones would be interested and would send people to us; which ones I ought to

> go see when certain things were happening; when individual referral money was coming and they would have some for another month—all these things.

Thus the compatibility fostered by hiring a person well acquainted with the operations of the Employment Service, a person who was able to establish parallel record keeping, greatly facilitated the flow of information between the organizations. And as the ABE director said, once that kind of compatibility had been established, they were "really swinging."

11. THE IMPORTANCE OF GAINING AND RECORDING INTELLIGENCE ON AND FOR YOUR LINKING PARTNER

The gathering of "intelligence" about other agencies by the ABE director and his staff is essential in maintaining linkages as well as developing them. The information should then be shared among ABE staff members. It need not be written; memoranda would be cumbersome and quickly outdated, and there will be paperwork enough without adding to the burden. Some of the types of information that might be shared include:

- Information about "personalities" and informal relationships among staff members in linking partner agencies. Who are your supporters? What fences need mending? (But see dangers of "badmouthing" under Item 14.)
- Information about staff turnover in agencies. Turnover will necessitate: introductions; providing a new staff member with orientation and, if possible, on-site visits to ABE program; re-negotiation of informal understandings that had been worked out with predecessor.
- Information about budgetary or other crises in a linking partner agency that may cause a change in its operation and affect the linkage.

Intelligence necessitates record-keeping, which is a necessary headache and, of course, increases in proportion to the number of linkage relationships an ABE program maintains. However, every director we interviewed testified to the cost-effectiveness of thorough, systematic records when reckoned against the increase in students, operating funds, and visibility.

Most organizations will require regular submission of data on students individually referred or participating in cosponsored classes. In addition, caseworkers will make inquiries about individuals—sometimes in person or by telephone, sometimes in writing. These data encompass not only attendance and academic progress, but personal data as well (biographical, psychological). And—inevitably—agencies will want the data organized in different ways. One may compute attendance on a percentage basis of total hours, for instance, while another may tally number of unexcused absences.

The writers of this Manual have neither the space nor the ingenuity to do more than sketch the parameters of an effective system of record keeping. In order to anticipate the types of data that must be collected and to begin to devise a system for storage and retrieval, the reader is advised to study the methods of the three programs that served as case studies.

12. THE VALUE OF INTERAGENCY FRIENDSHIPS

Once the machinery of a complex interagency linkage has been set up, personal friendships are the grease that enables the wheels to turn. In any linkage that is essentially bureaucratic, the difficult and desirable ideal is to enable non-formal relationships to function within the formal system. After a linkage has been established, and the formal agreements made with the

agency director, informal relationships, like the friendship between an ABE counselor and his opposite number in Employment or Social Services, are what make things happen. Your counselor can get on the phone and say, "Hey, Helen, what's happening with the bill the Governor signed yesterday? Will this affect our students? Will your agency still stipend our pre-GED people?" or "What are we going to do about Mrs. R? You know, you sent her over here three weeks ago and since then... ."

Personal relationships cut down on the red tape which, on occasion, threatens to strangle us all. And make no mistake about it, the paperwork required for the maintenance of an interagency linkage can tangle the machinery and bring the linkage to a grinding, clanking halt unless it can be minimized wherever possible.

Another advantage of interagency friendships, which is discussed in Item 16, is that friends in another agency may be able to influence that agency on behalf of your program, putting in a good word for ABE at critical junctures.

It should be pointed out that the type of friendship discussed here does not necessarily imply immediate or extensive social intimacy. Sara Knower, a counselor for the Albany program, suggested that while some agency staff prefer to get on a first-name basis immediately, others may prefer last names as well as titles. She tries to follow their style. A sensitivity to style is important for all ABE staff and is a concomitant of sensitivity to other characteristics of linking partners such as preference for written over oral communication and the bureaucratic constraints within which they must operate.

And speaking of bureaucratic etiquette, it is something ABE staff may sometimes tend to forget. Sara (that is, Ms. Knower) suggested a Golden Rule

in dealing with personnel of a hierarchical, formal organization. If you have a beef with a particular employee, have it out with him first to see if the two of you can work it out. Do not automatically go over his head to his boss. (See Item 14 for further discussion of conflict avoidance.)

13. THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING HONEST AND FORTHRIGHT

Honesty and forthrightness are essential ingredients of the relationships between people just discussed. They are also essential to harmonious relationships (linkages) between organizations.

Credibility requires not only being able to deliver on your promises but being certain that you do not promise what you cannot deliver. "Beware of oversell," cautioned one program staffer, noting that the personnel of other agencies—inexperienced caseworkers in particular—may tend to regard the ABE program as a panacea and may start referring any and everyone to your program. Sometimes this is done out of mistaken idealism; people in the helping professions are so anxious to help that, when few other options are available to the client, they will rationalize that "A little basic education never hurt anyone, and he'll get a stipend. . ." Sometimes over-referral is done out of cynicism or laziness—it amounts to "dumping" of clients who seem "impossible" or troublesome. And there are other reasons to beware of oversell. "Let's face it," said one director, "some social and political problems are just not amenable to solution by adult basic education... . You do a disservice to the individual client, to his community, and to the referring agency if you seem to suggest that they are."

Honesty is required in the type of linkage where a client is referred to the ABE program for testing to see whether he needs basic education before

commencing training. The ABE program must, where appropriate, call back the agency and say, "No, this client does not need our program; his test scores indicate that he is already at your entry level."

A troubling possibility in this situation is that agencies who refer clients for preliminary testing might use the results to screen out and drop low-scoring clients entirely, excluding them from training or from educational upgrading preparing them for training. All directors we interviewed address this possibility by exacting an agreement with each referral agency that it will not use the scores supplied by the ABE program to write clients off. In effect, this is one of the terms of the linkage agreement negotiated in advance.

Another question prompted by the obligations of honest reporting is a difficult one of degree—namely, confidentiality. Eremnise Landsman, Guidance Supervisor at the White Plains program, commented on this problem. The ABE teacher or counselor frequently sees more of, and is better acquainted with, a shared client than the referral or cosponsoring agency. Should he divulge personal information to the other agency that may be damaging to the client? For instance, through close observation the ABE counselor might suspect that the client has a drug problem. This is certainly a "grey area"; if the ABE program has recourse to supportive services like drug therapy, it might be possible for the ABE counselor to help the client solve his drug problem without notifying the agency. On the other hand, it seems clear that there are areas where ethics require divulging facts damaging to the client—for instance, the discovery by the ABE counselor that the client is defrauding the referral agency in order to get more stipending than he is entitled to. (All people

interviewed add that if the client is unaware of benefits to which he might be entitled, the counselor should so inform him.) There are certainly no easy answers, and careful judgment must be exercised.

14. AVOID CONFLICT WITH YOUR LINKING PARTNERS

"You dance with who brung you." This is Elliot Lethbridge's way of pointing out that interagency cooperation is based on mutual support. If you expect your linking partners to support your program when you need it, you will have to support them when they need it—even if supporting another agency causes problems for your program. Or to put it differently, when you plight your troth with other organizations, you must be prepared to assume some of their burdens. The most difficult burden to bear is probably public criticism. For example, if a referral agency adopts the policy of requiring its clients to sign in and out when attending ABE classes, some client hostility may be directed at ABE staff, even though they have no control over the policy.

Here's the crux: often your program cannot escape "blame by association," the attribution of responsibility for what are in fact the shortcomings of your linking partner. But on the other hand, your program cannot take the responsibility of trying to remedy their shortcomings. You cannot fire their doltish counselor or systematize their inefficient record-keeping. You can't meddle—not very much, at least—in their operation. This inevitably generates a certain frustration for you and your staff. But, as all our interviewees cautioned, if the linkage is to remain viable, it is absolutely necessary to avoid badmouthing your linking partners. Exchange of "intelligence" is one

thing, if it is in the privacy of an ABE staff meeting. Public backbiting is at issue here—and the face you present to your students when there is a disagreement.

Here is Charles (Chuck) Morgan, Assistant to the Dean of Community Services at Bergen Community College, and former director of their Learning Center, talking about how the dilemma can arise and how conflict might be avoided:

> We're talking about clients who are working with another training agency, for example. The training agency tells these people "our job training plan for you is to become a court stenographer. . .a clerical worker. . .a licensed practical nurse"—whatever it is. And oftentimes clients will find that they're unsure about that decision—that they're not happy about that decision. And they'll make attempts to get you to look at that decision with them, hoping to gather support—which is a natural thing.
>
> Let's say, for example, that a client doesn't want to be a licensed practical nurse; she really wants to be a dental hygienist, but she can't convince anyone in the training agency and she's looking to you for support. So you find yourself in a position of having to say, "Well, this is the kind of training that's available and you have to use it to your best advantage. But this is something you really need to talk about with your training counselor."
>
> (Interviewer): So you don't want to get caught in an adversary relationship with your linking partner.
>
> Chuck: Right, and it can easily happen because there are so many things going on. Many of your clients are working with more than one agency. And because communications are not always so fantastic, we don't always know what a given client situation is in toto or what someone said yesterday or the week before to the client.
>
> It can get hairy. Sometimes clients can read that apprehension in you and it makes them uncomfortable. You just have to say sometimes, "I really don't know and I'm going to have to talk with so-and-so." Then you talk with the agency counselor and try to share with him that the client is unhappy without making it sound like an accusation.

Several points emerge. One is the danger of an adversary relationship developing between linking partners. Even though the client may initiate it, ultimately he is the victim because he gets caught in the middle. Disagreements about a shared client can develop because ABE counselors, impressed by academic potential, frequently entertain greater ambitions for the student than do training counselors.

It is difficult to avoid counseling at cross purposes. Every guidance counselor we interviewed remarked on the difficulty of reaching a compromise. ABE directors tended to be more resigned than ABE counselors to the frequent necessity of yielding to the bureaucratic rules and regulations of the linking partners. One director, for example, stated that he and his staff tried to function as an amicus curiae in disputes between the client and the linking partner, submitting a brief on the clients' behalf but at the same time refraining from an adversary position.

Another means of conflict avoidance is respect for the expertise of other agencies. One director provided a useful reminder that the job training plan that a linking partner devises with and for the client it refers to you is not based simply on whatever training happens to be available. (This Manual does not wish to encourage scorn for large organizations solely because they are bureaucracies.) And particularly in cases where the client is receiving some kind of therapy through the other agency, well-intentioned meddling by ABE teachers or counselors can be damaging to the client as well as to the linkage.

One ABE director was particularly adamant that linking partners supplying vocational training, particularly the Employment Service, should have the lead in working out ultimate goals with the students they refer to ABE classes.

> ABE staff should supply plenty of input, of course, but shouldn't try to decide on behalf of the agency or the client, "Oh, I think he'd be better doing something else."
>
> ABE counselors in general have a woeful lack of knowledge of the job market, of the vagaries of the different major employers, of the times that jobs are open and jobs are closed. For example, there are jobs around here that hire only in the Spring... .

This director went on to tell the story of how he had considered an offer by a friend of the program to teach a lab technician training course even though the Employment Service staff advised against it. Luckily, he decided not to offer the course when he learned that the market would provide only six jobs per year. Another ABE program, however, did provide such a course, preparing 34 people, of whom they were able to place only two. That means that there are 32 trained and highly motivated people who are jobless and angry. "And that's the kind of amateurish tinkering that can happen," he said, "If you don't play ball with the people you're supposed to play ball with."

Finally, an ABE program can—if necessary—avoid conflict by giving in or opting out. The people we interviewed were willing to recount defeats as well as victories. Their advice was "Don't fight a losing battle" because of the risk that the bad feeling engendered may contaminate possibilities for developing new linkage relationships. One director's elegant epigram: "You must have enough linkages so that you can kiss one off." He added that if your program is itself the victim of a "kiss off," the result is vexing but not fatal, provided that you have other linkages to fall back on. Section Three on Costs supplies an inventory of signs that a linkage relationship is going sour, is no longer beneficial to the ABE program, and then suggests ways of terminating the linkage if it becomes absolutely necessary to do so.

15. COMPETITION AND CO-OPTING

It is difficult to advance any strategy for winning out over the competition without sounding downright Machiavellian. But all directors are familiar with situations where two separate ABE programs compete for the same clients. The competition is usually detrimental to both programs. Furthermore, the consequent duplication of services results in the expenditure of funds for separate administrative units that would function more cheaply and efficiently as one. One of the competing programs may eventually have to yield to the other, if the other program has significantly better instructional capabilities, more supportive services, operating funds, power, and visibility. Will your program be the one to yield? We hope not; we hope that it will be possible for the stronger program to absorb (co-opt) the smaller, weaker one rather than wiping it out entirely in a destructive power struggle. Co-opting makes possible the expansion of the ABE capability; funding is not forfeited, and more students can be served.

Readers may recall the story, told in Section One, of how the Albany Learning Center co-opted a literacy program that operated just one block away in the South End. Rancor was avoided because dirty fighting was avoided. Instead, the rival program was treated as if it were a linking partner. Students entering the Albany Learning Center who were looking for the other program were scrupulously "referred" to it. The rival program was given space and services were supplied that helped it fulfill its own mission more effectively (the quid pro quo rationale of a conventional linkage). The

eventual result was that the Albany Learning Center absorbed the literacy program and gained 20 to 30 new students.

In fact, the distinction between a linkage relationship and co-option is occasionally difficult to define. Elliot Lethbridge recounted how he and his staff noticed that in a matter of weeks, approximately 16 "walk-in's" who were residents of a halfway house for the mildly retarded showed up at Rochambeau's ABE program. This group evidently had its own grapevine, which the director of the halfway house was unaware of. These were people who could profit by adult basic education but whose classroom behavior was occasionally "inappropriate," disturbing the other adults in the program. Knowing that he could get extra funding to serve this special public, Lethbridge worked out an arrangement with the halfway house director to provide custom-designed classes at the ABE facility for the house residents. The result: more money and supportive services. Elliot Lethbridge has, by the way, prior experience in working with the mentally retarded. His expertise, combined with this successful experience of co-opting, has prompted him to plan a proposal seeking funds for additional classes for the retarded. "I have been told that this agency has oodles of money but they don't know how to spend it," he says. "Well, I think they about to meet a guy who does."

16. HAVE FRIENDS WHEN YOU NEED THEM

"We must hang together or, most assuredly, we will all hang separately." Benjamin Franklin could have been addressing organizations that serve the "disadvantaged" adult when he spoke of the need for mutual support in a difficult enterprise. In times of trouble--funding cutbacks, for instance—allies in

in other agencies that have enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship with the ABE program will put in a good word for the program wherever and whenever they can. And, according to the implicit agreement of the quid pro quo, the same will be done by the ABE program on behalf of its linking partners. Not coincidentally, the power of the ABE program to exert influence on behalf of its partners derives in part from linkages with the allies it now seeks to defend.

A particularly important ally for most ABE programs is the staff of the State Education Department, according to all directors whom we interviewed. It was explained that the State Education Department carries a lot of weight in situations where a prospective linking partner is slightly dubious of the ABE program's efficacy. Another crucial situation is one where an agency staff member wants to initiate a linkage with the ABE program and needs some sort of official endorsement of the program in order to convince his superiors. (In some cases, the cautious staff member may be seeking a way to escape the blame if the linkage fails.) The sanction of the State Education Department, whether unofficial or official, can often tip the balance in ABE's favor in dealing with an outside agency.

Again and again during the interviews conducted for this publication, stories were told of the friends of ABE, the contacts, who had risen in their respective hierarchies. As recounted in the first section of this Manual, one Welfare caseworker with whom Garrett Murphy used to pay calls eventually became Depauty Commissioner of Social Services for the state. A woman who obtained data for her M.A. thesis at the White Plains ABE program is now a senior district officer for that city. A linkage formed with the local branch of the State Employment resulted in a friendship between the ABE director and

the head of the local office, who became area director of Manpower. A former student who obtained his equivalency diploma comparatively recently rose rapidly at a local company which secures basic education for its employees; he is the company's designated liaison with the ABE program to maintain the linkage.

There is another respect in which early investments in interagency linkages pay long-term dividends, and this is at the organizational rather than the personal level. Linkage networks expand; there is a multiplyer effect. For instance: a linkage with the Chamber of Commerce proves so successful that the Chamber steers one of its own linking partners, the OJT (On-the-Job Training) program, to the ABE program. The dynamic has been described in the first section of this Manual: interagency linkages bring more student referrals and promote visibility; more students bring more operating funds; more funding increases the range and variety of services that the ABE program can provide. . .and all these in turn promote visibility, draw more students, help secure more funding, and so on. The possibilities for program growth that are stimulated by linkages are geometric possibilities.

INVENTORY OF LINKAGE POSSIBILITIES

Thus far in this section we have presented sixteen general principles of linkage formation and maintenance. It is now time to become more specific—to convey the advice we have gathered on how a director can approach certain categories of organizations and to explain what kinds of resources an ABE program might expect to gain from them.

Service-oriented agencies. Service-oriented agencies are organizations which provide a service such as health care, welfare assistance, job training or job placement to clients who require it. Like the ABE program, these agencies tend to be publicly funded, and most serve a disadvantaged clientele. The best prospects for linkage are with service-oriented agencies where ABE will complement the agency's mission. For example, basic education complements the Employment Service mission because it helps make the unemployed employable. Most service-oriented agencies whose clients could benefit from basic education, however, have neither the money, authorization or expertise to provide it themselves. Hence they are ripe for cosponsorships or referral arrangements.

Our respondents have stressed that when seeking a referral relationship, it is best to first approach the director of the service agency, invite him to see your operation if possible, and convince him that his organization needs ABE. Service agencies are rated according to how well they help their clients; they, too, play the "numbers game." Demonstrate how ABE will enable the agency head to provide better assistance to his clients (because, of course, the better the service an agency renders, the easier it is to secure more clients). It is doubtful, however, that an agency head himself will refer many students to the ABE program, for he rarely has contact with clients. The next step, then, is to form a close personal association with the agency's "line" personnel—the caseworkers or counselors who actually work with the clients. Convince them that ABE will enable them to perform their helping roles better. If this is done effectively, the ABE director should be able to establish a friendship with every agency employee who sees clients. The final step is to

encourage the development of friendships between ABE teachers and counselors and the agency line employees.

Several other points: first, be sure to give feedback to service-oriented agencies about how well their referrals are progressing. Evidence of their clients' success helps service agencies to justify their existence and to secure additional funding. Second, if the ABE program has a full program of testing for its own students, it should consider offering a free testing service to service-oriented agencies that could use test data. When clients from other agencies come to the ABE program to be tested, they are perfect recruitment prospects. Moreover, since service-oriented agencies really appreciate the testing service, linkages formed with them tend to be strong and lasting. Finally, a note of caution: most service-oriented agencies engage in extensive counseling of their clients. Be sure that your counselors or teachers do not counsel at cross purposes. (For more on the perils of counseling at cross purposes, see pages 61-62).

Among our case study programs, the two most common service agency linkages are with Social Services (the Work Incentive Program) and the Employment Service. Though our respondents report that Welfare is often difficult to work with because of its intricate bureaucracy and frequent policy shifts, it is an excellent source of students and supportive services. The Employment Service is also an excellent source of referrals, and students can be referred back for job placement or training. Linkages with the Employment Service are particularly worthwhile if that agency's counselors can be convinced to counsel students at the ABE site on a regular basis.

The Neighborhood Youth Corps is a good referral or cosponsorship source, especially since its clients already have stipends. Some of our respondents have reported, however, that because they are less mature, Neighborhood Youth Corps referrals occasionally disrupt classes and become discipline problems. ABE directors have minimized this problem by reluctantly placing quotas on younger age groups or by segregating the disruptive students in a special class staffed by a teacher who can handle special problems.

Some service-oriented agencies serve disabled clientele—the aged, the blind, the mentally ill, and the drug addict. Referral or cosponsorship linkages with such agencies can provide a great social benefit as well as numerous students to the ABE program. Service to the disabled, however, places special demands on the ABE program. To educate blind students, an ABE program will need Braille materials, tutoring assistance, specially trained teachers, transportation for students, and special dispensation to give the GED examination orally. Students with certain mental disorders may make regular ABE students feel sufficiently uncomfortable to drop out of class. Therefore, the best policy is generally to conduct classes on a satellite or outreach basis. Drug rehabilitation programs are often excellent prospects for cosponsorship. There is evidence to show that adult education aids drug therapy; moreover, drug rehabilitation programs generally provide numerous incentives for ABE students to remain in the program until they have achieved their objectives.

Custodial agencies such as prisons, jails and mental hospitals are a good source of cosponsorships, though special attention has to be paid to matters of security. Many prisons, for example, will not permit female teachers.

Negotiation for a linkage with a custodial agency is generally relatively complex, requiring an inordinate amount of the director's time. Several studies have shown that prisoners who take part in educational programs are less likely to return to prison—a good negotiation point.

Hospitals, Businesses, and Industrial Organizations might want to provide ABE to their employees. Look to those industries, businesses and hospitals which employ many non-English speaking or undereducated, unskilled workers.

Hospitals are particularly good prospects because they generally hire undereducated workers who come in close contact with the seriously ill. Employees who can not read safety or patient care regulations may unknowingly spread infection. Since patient safety is at stake, hospitals are often quite willing to release their employees with pay to attend cosponsored classes. The benefits of this kind of arrangement in terms of recruitment and retention are obvious. Industries where employees work in hazardous situations or where employees need to follow directions precisely are also good prospects. When employees are injured because they can not read safety warnings, the cost of insurance goes up and there is considerable work time lost to the industry. And when employees can not speak English well, someone has to be released from production to translate. Another tip: look for industries and unions which are having Affirmative Action problems. ABE can help.

The person to contact in most business, industries, and hospitals is the personnel director—though the higher you go, the better. It helps if you can demonstrate how many undereducated employees there are. If your contact

doubts that he employs many undereducated employees, you might offer to undertake a simple survey of employees' interest in ABE. Try to convince management to release employees with pay to attend cosponsored classes or to guarantee job promotions to successful students. Another incentive that employers may be willing to provide is a cash bonus to all employees who achieve eighth grade certification or pass the GED examination. Many ABE programs which cosponsor classes with business, industries, or hospitals tailor their curricula to include terminology and measurements used in the plant or hospital. This is a good point for neogtiation, as it helps the student and benefits the industry or hospital as well.

There are problems in dealing with employee-oriented organizations. After-work cosponsorships are often decimated by the advent of overtime; when students must choose between ABE and overtime pay, ABE generally loses. Occasionally, unions block cosponsored classes by claiming that ABE is job-related training which must be paid for by the employer at the rate of time-and-a-half overtime pay for the participants.

SECTION III

COSTS AND PROBLEMS OF LINKAGES

Up to this point we have made it seem as though the success of a program of community linkages is guaranteed. Realistic readers may be skeptical of this portrayal, and rightfully so. Why does it seem that our sample programs have never failed? The answer, of course, is that we have highlighted successes in order to demonstrate the enormous benefits which may accrue from interagency relationships. In actuality, however, establishing and maintaining linkages requires a great deal of effort. In the real world, failures do occur.

A linkage relationship can be said to have failed when it costs more than it benefits the ABE program. We have explained most of the benefits. What, then, are the costs?

Loss of Autonomy

In every linkage relationship, the parties to the linkage generally lose some of their operating autonomy. For example, in a cosponsored class with an industrial concern, the cosponsor may want some say in hiring the teachers. If the linkage is an important one, and the ABE director accedes to the cosponsor's request, the ABE program loses some of its hiring autonomy. Loss of autonomy becomes most severe when the ABE program has established only a few linkages. Let's say, for example, that 80 percent of a program's students are referrals from the Work Incentive Program (WIN). Not being able to afford a great loss in enrollment, the ABE program might be forced to accede to demands from WIN. The lesson, of course, is to develop the number and diversity of your linkages. In that way, if loss of autonomy becomes

too great a cost to bear, a program can afford to terminate those linkages which cause it.

Time

The time spent in establishing linkages can be expensive indeed to the ABE director. More time generally has to be spent during the early stages of linkage development, for as program credibility and visibility increase, potential linkers will begin to approach the ABE program, thus saving the director considerable legwork. Maintenance of linkages also requires staff time. Feedback data, for example, generally have to be gathered for co-sponsors and referral agencies; ABE staff must prepare and transmit the data. Clearly, the best way to cut the time required to establish and maintain linkages is to maximize administrative efficiency. This means delegating authority for linkage relationships, establishing efficient record-keeping procedures, and focusing linkage-building activities on organizations which are most likely to accept the relationship.

Goal Displacement

Goal displacement occurs when the ABE program engages in activities which deflect it from achieving its primary objective—the education of under-educated adults. In one New England city, for example, an ABE program formed a linkage with an organization of foreign physicians. Although provision of English as a second language training to this group was undoubtedly a valuable social service, the relationship deflected this program from serving as many disadvantaged adults as it might have. The temptation to establish linkages which are not instrumental in fulfilling the ABE mission is often

great. Self-discipline is important.

Organizational Disruption

Organizational disruption occurs when the normal operating procedures of the ABE program are in some way disturbed and the delivery of ABE is made less efficient. In one of our case study programs, for instance, a referral linkage with a certain agency created an influx of younger adults who presented discipline problems. The often boisterous behavior of these younger students impelled some of the more mature adults to defect from ABE classes. As a result, the program director was forced to place a quota on the number of students accepted from this agency—an unfortunate but necessary action designed to reduce the cost of organizational disruption.

Loss of autonomy and administrative time, goal displacement, and organizational disruption are but some of the costs of a program of community linkages. The experienced director can probably think of several more. The only way to deal with linkage relationships which prove too costly to your program is to terminate them. Yet termination is not always an easy thing. It has to be handled sensitively and diplomatically, or the ensuing ill will can cause great harm to the ABE program.

Termination

In some cases terminating a linkage will cause bad feeling. An ABE director might be able to minimize the acrimony by specifying the reasons for termination in organizational terms, which are comparatively impersonal and enable the staff of the other agency to save face. This can be done by stating the truism that the primary responsibility of the ABE program or,

indeed, of any organization is to maintain itself and that it cannot do so unless certain conditions are met. Therefore, since the linkage in question prevents these conditions from being met, it is necessary to terminate that linkage. This is a valid explanation in fact as well as theory and can be stated diplomatically.

In order to retain the option of a "diplomatic out," linking partners must make the conditions of their relationship crystal clear and must do so at the outset of the relationship. A specific example already supplied is the provision that the free testing done by the ABE program must not be used by other agencies to automatically exclude clients from training programs. Other "conditions" would probably cover: maximum length of time in the ABE program for referral clients; which of the two partners enforces attendance requirements stipulated by the referral or cosponsor agency; general standards of student behavior and rate of progress in ABE classes; the frequency and format of feedback and other paperwork supplied by the ABE program; as well as the degree of autonomy maintained by the ABE program in hiring its own staff and determining curriculum. Formal contractual arrangements may be necessary in some instances, particularly when instructional services are purchased; such contractual arrangements usually contain a 30-day "out" clause for either party.

If conditions have been specified in this way, it may be possible for the ABE director to re-negotiate the terms of the linkage in an effort to salvage the relationship. If termination is absolutely necessary, however, diplomacy can prevent the type of interagency squabble that is so damaging

to the reputations of both parties to the linkage.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT: A STATEMENT OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

Adult education is in many ways different from any other field of education. As Burton Clark[1] and Stanley Moses[2] have noted, adult education tends to be marginal in comparison to elementary, secondary and traditional higher education. When government allocates funds for education, for example, we are the last to receive, the first to lose, and we get less. Adult education agencies are usually attached to other educational institutions which have control over our activities even though they do not really understand what we do. Our power position in relation to most other forms of education is weak. Although our situation seems to have improved in the past ten years, marginality remains a critical problem of the field.

We are also an extremely broad and diverse field of education. Though public school continuing education, non-traditional higher education, continuing professional education, training in business and industry, and adult education in the armed forces are all defined as part of the field, they are so different from each other that it is difficult to bind them together into

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[1]Burton Clark, Adult Education in Transition: A Study of Institutional Insecurity (Berkeley: University of California Press) 1958.

[2]Stanley Moses, The Learning Force: A More Comprehensive Framework for Educational Policy (Syracuse University: Publications in Continuing Education) 1971.

a cohesive force. And then there is that mistaken notion of public philosophy which implies that education is only for children and youth—that adult education is a luxury not central to the needs of our society.

In conclusion, likened to "developing" nations, we are a "developing" field of education. Yet how do we develop? Yuchtman and Seashore provide a clue in their definition of organizational effectiveness:

> We propose, accordingly, to define effectiveness of an organization in terms of its bargaining position, as reflected in the ability of the organization, in either absolute or relative terms, to exploit its environment in the acquisition of scarce and valued resources.[1]

If the purpose of program development is to provide a more effective service, both qualitatively and quantatively speaking, then by extrapolation, the key to program development becomes the ability of an adult education agency to gain more resources from its environment. To be sure, such traditional elements of program development as planning, community organization, needs assessment, and evaluation are important. Yet all these are for naught unless the resource base is there. Thus, the first principle of program development in adult education should be to exploit the environment persistently and aggressively in order to secure resources needed for program maintenance and growth.

Simplistic, says the skeptic... besides we already do that! Not exactly, we would retort. Clearly, all adult education programs seek resources.

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[1]Ephraim Yuchtman and Stanley Seashore, "A System Resource Approach to Organizational Effectiveness," American Sociological Review, Vol. 32, No. 6 (December 1967) pp. 891-903.

They do so because they must, but quite often they fail to define their environment in an imaginative way. In terms of gaining resources, they see government funding as the sole source or they are satisifed with the resources allocated by a parent institution. This leads to the second general principle of program development. In adult education, the concept of "environment" must be broadened to include all the institutions and individuals within a particular program's operating sphere. From the second principle follows a third: the search for resources must be diversified so that an adult education program is not dependent on any one source for survival. A fourth principle might be inferred: namely, that the term "resource" must be broadened to include other than monetary assistance.

Such tangible resources as staff, facilities, participants, and instructional materials may be secured from the "environment"; such intangible resources as power, prestige, and visibility are typically only obtained by acting on the environment.

In the preceding chapters, numerous other principles for program development in adult education have been presented and explained. Though these principles are cast in the context of adult basic education, we hope that adult educators in other fields will be able to extrapolate, for it is our conclusion that the community linkage approach to program development is indeed a powerful and promising one.

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